

from Burgos jail



Poems and drawings
presented by Appeal for Amnesty in Spain



Appeal for Amnesty in Spain
32, Ledbury Road
London W.11

The *Appeal for Amnesty in Spain*, by gathering information concerning Spanish political prisoners and exiles and placing it before the British public, has since 1959, fostered support for the demand for a total amnesty for all Spanish political prisoners and the right for all exiles to return safely to their native land.

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This demand, first voiced from within Spain itself, is not concerned with the political affiliations, or beliefs, of these men and women, but with the upholding of human dignity and the defence of human rights. Experience has shown that where the facts become known people are moved to protest and take whatever action is most suitable to the beliefs they hold, the groups or organisations to which they belong.

Recent happenings in Spain, political executions and torturing of arrested strikers, have brutally recalled the methods of the Inquisition and horrified the world. Nonetheless, much has been achieved. Although too many still remain in jail, some have been released, often after serving sentences of ten, fifteen or twenty years imprisonment.

It is for the sake of the men and women still liable to arrest, torture and imprisonment, for those still behind bars for standing out against oppression, that we appeal for help to all with compassionate feelings.

The *Appeal for Amnesty in Spain* presents in this booklet the plea of three Spanish political prisoners, two of whom are still detained in Burgos Jail and the third is now in exile, after spending his youth and early manhood in prison. They speak for themselves.

April 1964

2 Biographical Notes

Born in Bilbao in 1930. The son of an industrial worker, Ibarrola experienced bitter poverty throughout childhood. He started drawing at an early age and turned to painting whilst working in a Bilbao factory. At the age of sixteen he won a municipal art scholarship and two years later gave his first one-man exhibition. From early days he was openly critical of the stifled condition of Basque art and culture and the lack of artistic freedom in Spain. In large murals intended for the new basilica of Aranzazu, he depicted the lives of ordinary working people; this being considered subversive, the murals were later destroyed by order of the local authorities.

In the spring of 1962, at the time of the great miners' strike in the Asturias, Ibarrola, with a number of other painters and poets, organised an exhibition and lecture tour on the theme of the Spanish people's struggle against poverty and oppression. The exhibition was seized and the organisers arrested by the political police. After being tortured for several days in the course of interrogation, Ibarrola attempted to commit suicide. Later, tried by Military Tribunal in September 1962 and accused of having participated in the organisation of the strikes, he was sentenced to nine years imprisonment for "military rebellion". He is at present detained in Burgos Jail.

In spite of the difficulties he has continued working during his imprisonment. Some of his drawings, including those reproduced in this booklet, mostly in black ink on flimsy paper, have been gradually smuggled out of the prison. Designed to focus the attention of the outside world upon the continued oppression and existence of political prisoners in present day Spain, forty of these drawings were first publicly exhibited in London by the "Appeal for Amnesty in Spain" in December 1963. The exhibition attracted exceptionally widespread interest.

Born in Vizcaya in 1922 into an industrial worker's family, he was sent out of Spain during the Civil War like thousands of other Spanish children. He first worked as a kitchen-hand in France in 1937 then as a farmworker, and later in Belgium as a coalminer. Returning to Spain after the war, he earned his living in a naval construction yard.

Always extremely interested in literature, he wrote poems, mostly with a social content, contributed to a number of publications and became known abroad despite the fact that on several occasions his manuscripts were seized by the political police. Arrested in spring 1962, when working as a translator, he was accused of organising moral and material support for the Asturian miners then on strike for whom he publicly expressed his sympathy. He was tried by Military Tribunal in September 1962 and sentenced to six years imprisonment for "military rebellion".

The younger of his two small children was born immediately following his arrest. In the autumn of 1963, together with a few others, he was punished by the Burgos prison Governor by a lengthy period of solitary confinement for having refused to attend compulsory mass and demanding freedom of conscience for prisoners. Due to this courageous stand, and to considerable outside protest, this demand was eventually conceded.

Born in Salamanca in 1921, the youngest son of poor peasants. When still a boy he earned his living as a pedlar. He joined the socialist youth movement at the beginning of the Civil War during which his father was killed. Arrested at the end of the war with men of the Republican Army trapped on the French frontier, Marcos Ana spent two years in prison in appalling conditions before being brought to trial and sentenced to death. The sentence was commuted to thirty years imprisonment because of his youth. Later, following the discovery of a clandestine news sheet in the prison, there followed a long period of solitary confinement, a new trial, a new death sentence commuted to a further thirty years imprisonment. His mother died of heart failure when told of her son's second death sentence.

Marcos Ana started writing in prison and gradually became known abroad, notably in South America where his poems were first published. After spending twenty-two years in prison, from the age of eighteen years old, he was eventually released at the age of forty as a result of consistent pressure of the international campaign demanding an amnesty for Spanish political prisoners. Soon after his release he was compelled to leave his country and join the many thousands of Spaniards in exile. A short time later, in the spring of 1962, he visited Britain at the invitation of the "Appeal for Amnesty in Spain".



Mi Corazon es Patio

La tierra no es redonda,
es un patio cuadrado
donde los hombres giran
bajo un cielo de estaño.

Soñé que el mundo era
un redondo espectáculo
envuelto por el cielo,
con ciudades y campos
en paz, con trigo y besos,
con ríos, montes y anchos
mares donde navegan
corazones y barcos.
Pero el mundo es un patio.
(Un patio donde giran
los hombres sin espacio).

A veces, cuando subo
a mi ventana, palpo
con mis ojos la vida
de luz que voy soñando.
Y entonces, digo: "El mundo
es algo más que el patio
y estas losas terribles
donde me voy gastando".
Y oigo colinas, libres
voces entre los álamos,
la charla azul del río
que ciñe mi cadalso.
"Es la vida", me dicen
los aromas, el canto
rojo de los jilgueros,
la música en el vaso
blanco y azul del día,
la risa de un muchacho ...

My Heart is a Yard

The earth is not circular
it is a square-shaped yard
where men go round and round
under a sky of tin.

I dreamed that the world was
an ever-turning pageant
wrapped around by the sky
with cities and fields
in peace, with cornfields and kisses,
with rivers, mountains and open
seas where hearts and
boats go sailing.
But the world is a yard.
(A yard where men go round
and round and have no space).

At times when I go over
to my window, with my eyes
I can touch and feel the living
light of which I dream.
And then I say "The world
is something more than yard
and these appalling flagstones
where I slowly waste away."
And I can hear hills and free
voices among the poplars,
the blue chatter of the river
which laps around my scaffold.
"This is life" I am told
by the scents and by the scarlet
song sung by the linnets,
by the sound of music in the
blue and white glass of day,
by the laugh of a boy ...

Pero es soñar despierto.
(Mi reja es un costado
de un sueño que da al campo).

Amanezco, y ya todo
— fuera del sueño — es patio :
un patio donde giran
los hombres sin espacio.
¡ Hace ya más de un siglo
que nacl emparedado,
que me olvidé del mundo,
de cómo canta el árbol,
de la pasión que enciende
el amor en los labios,
de si hay puertas sin llaves
y otras manos sin clavos !

Yo ya creo que todo
— fuera del sueño — es patio.
(Un patio bajo un cielo
de fosa, desgarrado,
que acuchillan y acotan
muros y pararrayos).
.....
Ya ni el sueño me lleva
hacia mis libres años.
Ya todo, todo, todo
— hasta en el sueño — es patio.

Un patio donde gira
mi corazón, clavado ;
mi corazón, desnudo ;
mi corazón, clamando ;
mi corazón, que tiene
la forma gris de un patio.

(Un patio donde giran
los hombres sin descanso)

But it is a daydream
(My grating is one side of a dream
that opens on to the fields).
I wake to life, and all
— except the dream — is yard :
a yard where men go round
and round and have no space.

A hundred years have passed
since I was born immured,
since I forgot the world,
the way a tree will sing,
forgot the passion which
love in the lips enkindles,
forgot if there are doors that have no keys
and other men have hands that are not nailed.

And now I feel that all
— except the dream — is yard.
(A yard beneath a lacerated sky
hacked into shape and bounded
by ramparts and by lightning rods).

.....
Now not even the dream will carry me
back to my years of freedom.
Now all, all, all
— even the dream — is yard.
And round this yard there goes
my heart and it is pierced,
my heart and it is naked
my heart and it cries out
my heart and it possesses
the grey shape of the yard.

(A yard where men go round
and round and have no rest).

Pequeña Carta al Mundo

Los dicentes de una ballesta
me tienen clavado el vuelo.

Tengo el alma desgarrada
de tirar, pero no puedo
arrancarme estos cerrojos
que me atraviesan el pecho.

Siete mil doscientas veces
la luna cruzó mi cielo ;
otras tantas, la dorada
libertad cruzó mi sueño.

El sol me hace crecer flores,
¿ para qué, si estéril veo
que entre los muros mi sangre
se me deshoja en silencio ?

No sabeis lo que es un hombre,
sangrando y roto, en un cepo.
Si lo supiéseis vendríais
en las olas y en el viento,
desde todos los confines,
con el corazón desecho,
enarbolando los puños
para salvar lo que es vuestro.

Si llegais ya tarde un día
y encontráis frío mi cuerpo,
de nieve a mis camaradas
entre sus cadenas muertos . . .
recoged nuestras banderas,
nuestro dolor, nuestro sueño,
los nombres que en las paredes

A Short Letter to the World

Gripped in a crossbow's teeth
I am held and cannot fly.

My soul is torn
by its struggle to break free
but I cannot pull out these bolts
that have been shot home through my breast.

More than seven thousand times
the moon has passed across my sky ;
golden liberty has passed
across my dreams as many times.

For me the sun makes flowers grow
—yet why ? if sterile I can see
how silently within the walls
my blood is being stripped from me.

You do not know what a man is
torn and bleeding in a snare.
If you knew it you would come
on the waves and on the wind
out of every borderland
with your hearts melting and sick
holding up your fists aloft
come to rescue what is yours.

If one day you come too late
and you find my body cold,
if you find my comrades dead
white as snow among their chains,
pick our banners up again
and our anguish and our dreams
and the names upon the walls

8 con dulce amor grabaremos.

Y si nos cerrais los ojos
¡ dejadnos los muros dentro !
que se pudran con el polvo
de nuestra carne y no puedan
ser nuevas tumbas de presos.

.....
No sabeis lo que es un hombre
sangrando y roto, en un cepo.

Si lo supiéseis vendrÍais
en las olas y en el viento,
desde todos los confines,
para salvar lo que es vuestro.

Si llegais ya tarde un día
y encontrais frío mi cuerpo,
buscad en las soledades
del muro mi testamento :
al mundo le dejo todo
lo que tengo y lo que siento,
lo que he sido entre los míos,
lo que soy, lo que sostengo :
una bandera sin llanto,
un amor, algunos versos . . .
y en las piedras lacerantes
de este patio gris, desierto,
mi grito como una estatua
terrible y roja, en el centro.

which we carved with loving care.

And if you close our eyes
leave us shut inside the walls
so that they may turn to dust
with our flesh and nevermore
be the tombs of prisoners.

.....
You do not know what a man is
torn and bleeding in a snare.
If you realised you would come
on the waves and on the wind
out of every borderland
come to rescue what is yours.

If one day you come too late
and you find my body cold
look among the lonely places
in the wall to find my will :
to the world I do bequeath
all I have and all I feel
all I was among my kind
all I am and all I stand for :
one banner that brings no sorrow
one love, a little verse . . .
and on the lacerating stones
of this grey yard which none will enter
my cry to stand like an appalling
scarlet statue in the centre.

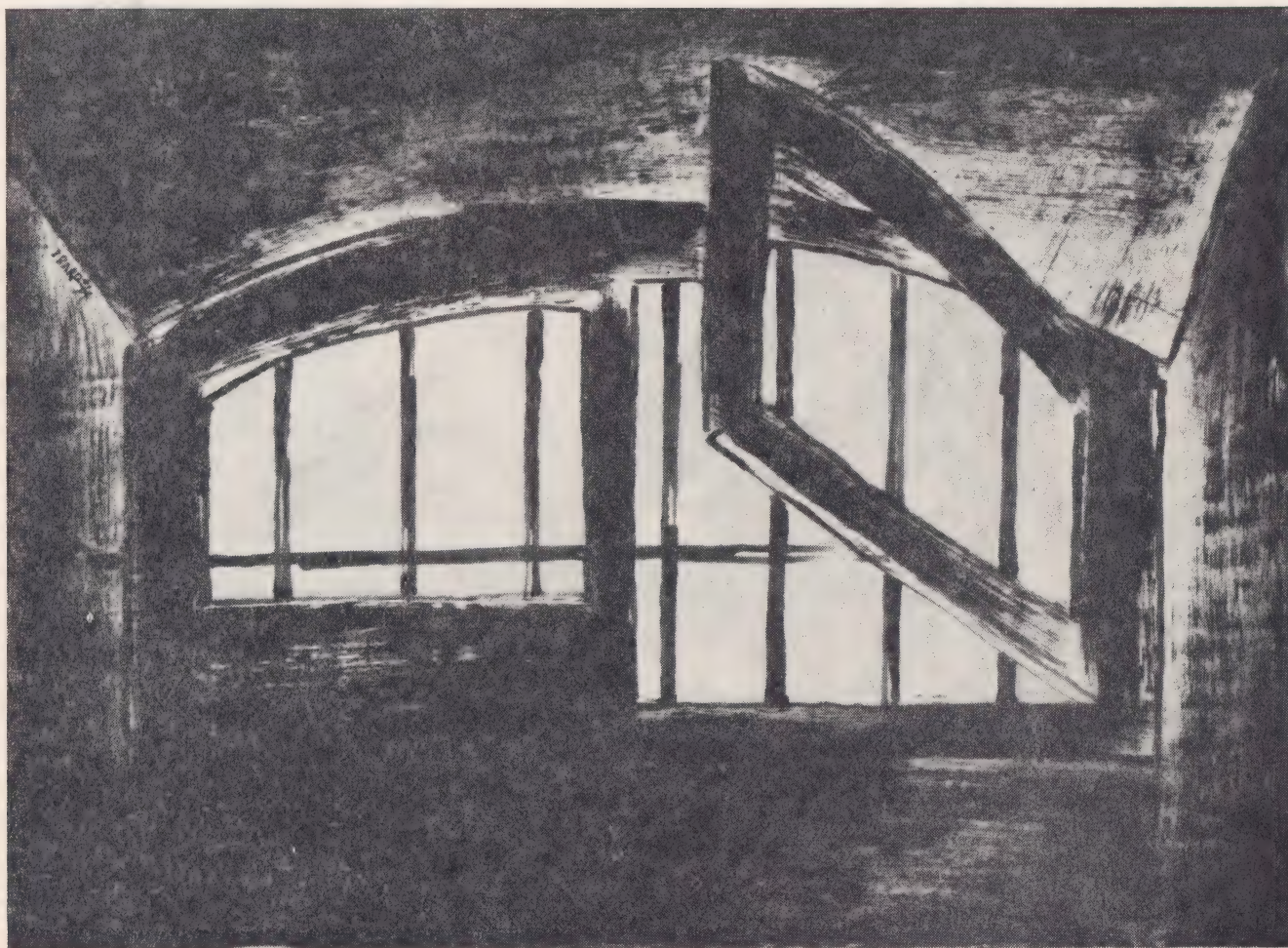
Tren en la Noche

Lejano,
indiferente a todo,
un giron de su grito hasta mi reja,
pasa el expreso. Algo invisible
entra en la noche
resoplando.
En el vagón de cola,
clandestinamente,
mi nostalgia
se va de viaje a la estación del alba.

Train in the Night

Miles away
and utterly indifferent
its faint scream reaching my barred window,
the express is passing.
Something invisible
enters the night
with stertorous breath.

In the last coach
secretly
my nostalgia
is travelling towards the station of dawn.



Cuando Mas Amo La Libertad

Cuando mas amo la libertad, agosto, las mejillas
de Raquel, el albedrío con el vaso de vino
levantado :

esa horrible postal del policía.
El olor de uniformes me llegaba,
sus vigilantes fusiles homicidas,
el recuerdo de sangres torturadas,

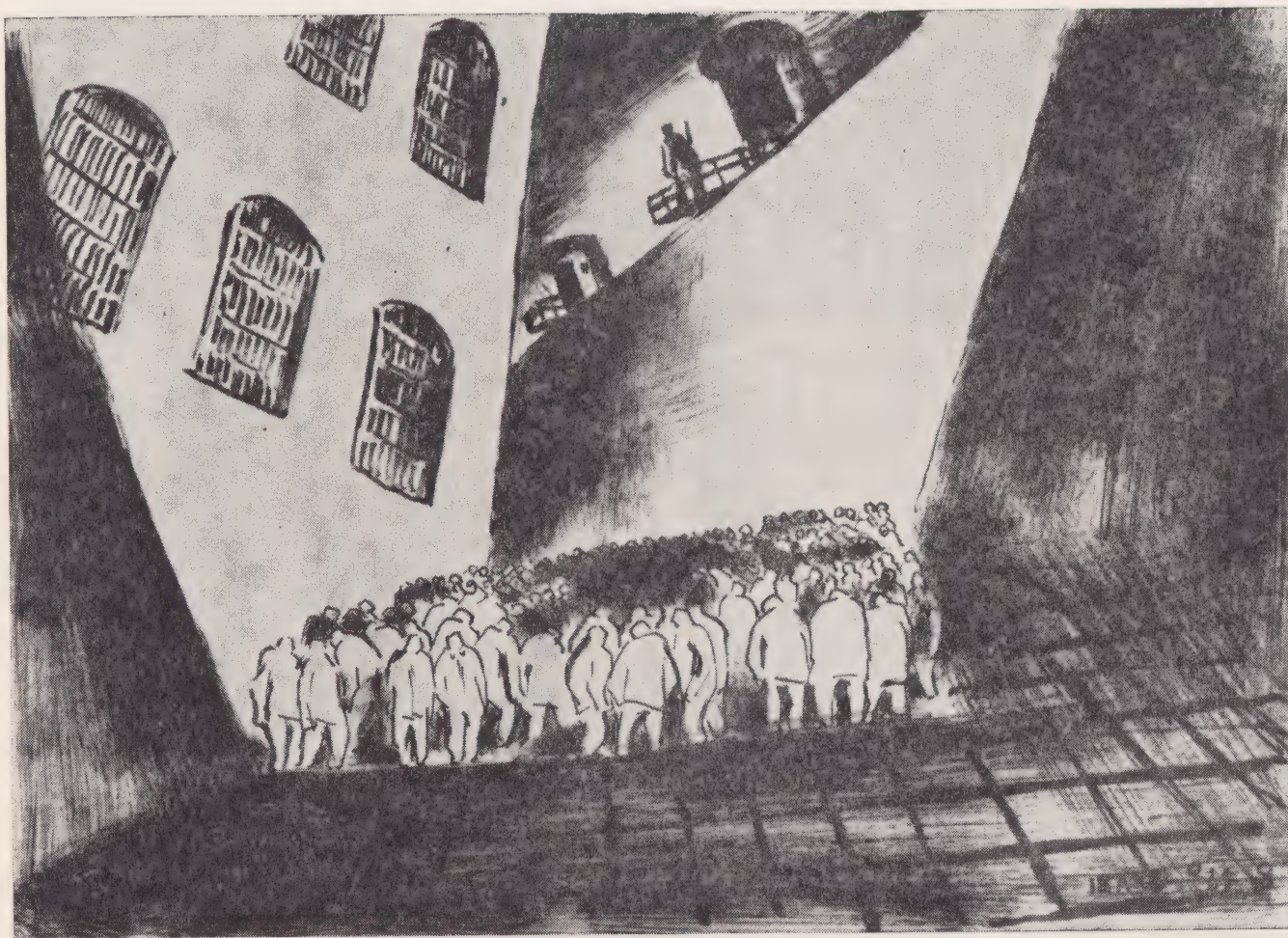
10 la dimensión cercada de mi patria herida.

When I love freedom best.

This is when I love freedom best : Rachel's cheeks in August,
the moment of free will with the wineglass halfway to my lips—

that horrible police station
with its smell of uniforms,
guns ready for the kill,
and memories of tortured blood,

walled limits of my wounded country.



Era el momento mismo de refugiarme mis besos en la hierba
y comer con mi compañera manzanas en la brisa.

Un acecho de ojos subiendo en los tranvías,
registrando los cines y las olas,
parapetándose en los pinos y en las algas,
sacándome la libertad de los bolsillos.

"Esto es mío — les digo.
"Mi territorio de amistad.
El litoral, las rocas de nuestra independencia.
Octubre es mío para compartirlo con quien quiera.
Reclamo mis herramientas de trabajo, mi tintero".

¿ De quien todo ese amor sobreabundante ?

Ellos registran mi traje de poeta
y me quitan la pluma, el corazón, la patria,
mi cartera repleta de recuerdos.

"Vete a buscar entre los tuyos la igualdad" me dicen.

Y saben que los míos son obreros,
hijos de obreros y padres del trabajo.
Y que la igualdad es ahora el mismo calabozo ;
el mismo linaje preso-proletario ;
las mismas cicatrices artesanas,
la misma decisión de inaugurar el día.

El mismo . . . la misma . . . La igualdad, es cierto.

Y el mar es sospechoso y subversivo
y se teme una huelga de gaviotas.
Y vigilan los brotes de los pinos por ver si se ha instalado
en ellos, la multicopista de la primavera.

Se temen las octavillas de los trigos,
las proclamas de paz de las palomas,
las páginas dobladas de los libros,
las risas de los hombres y sus besos.
Se teme la esperanza multitudinaria.

Preso y todo, me río.

¿ Como van a detener con la tortura
ese sol que se anuncia de mi pueblo ?

It was the time to eat apples with my sweetheart in the soft
wind, hiding our kisses in the grass.

Their eyes lay in wait in the trams,
scanning cinemas and breakers,
ambushed behind pinetrees and among the wrack ;
snatching freedom out of my pocket.

"This is mine" I tell them,
"my territory of friendship,
the coast, the rocks of our independence.
October is mine to share with anyone I please.
I demand the tools of my trade, my ink bottle."

Whose is all this excess of love ?

They examine my dress, my poet's trappings,
they take away my pen, my heart, my country,
my wallet packed with memories.

"Go and seek equality among your own people" they tell me,

And they know that my people are workers,
sons of workers and fathers of toil.
And that equality means sharing the same dungeon,
the same condition of common men in jail,
the scars of manual work, the same
determination that the day shall come.

The same this . . . the same that . . . Equality indeed !

The sea is always suspect and subversive.
Who knows ? The gulls may organise a strike.
The pinewoods must be watched, for fear they harbour
the illicit duplicators of the spring.

The whisper of the cornfields may be treason,
there is danger in the peace talk of the doves,
or in the dog-eared pages of a book,
in human laughter and in human kisses,
and in the multitudinous hopes of man.

Prisoner as I am, I burst out laughing.
How will they manage to arrest and torture
the sun now on its way from my home town ?

Prisión Central

Muros hirsutos. Asperas cortezas
donde el hombre se duele cada día.
Apretada oquedad de llaga y fosa.

Socavón de Castilla. Lento espanto.
Catedral invertida hacia la tumba,
bajo una piel de piedra cancerosa.

Hay un árbol, aquí, pleno, enterrado,
de corazones vivos, que semejan
tréboles rojos en la luz borrosa :

muchas hojas, sin sangre, van cayendo ;
mas su raíz fosfórica florece
una bandera abierta en cada losa.

Y en esta pena oscura donde habita
mi corazón en sombras, ya tan sólo
la luz de esa bandera es asombrosa.

Central Prison

These bristling walls. This jagged rind of rock
Where a man hurts himself afresh each day.
This narrow cavity of seam and grave.

Catacomb of Castile. Long drawn out horror.
Cathedral pointing downwards to the tomb,
Under a carapace of rotting stone.

Here in the depths there is a tree, whose boughs
Are full of living hearts, that simulate
Red clover blossoms in the muddy light.

And many leaves fall bloodless to the ground,
But the phosphoric root has given birth
To open banners covering every flagstone.

And now in this dark suffering where my heart
Lives in the shadows, nothing breaks the gloom
Except the sudden brightness of these banners.

Su herida golpead de vez en cuando ;
no dejadla jamás que cicatrice.
Que arroje sangre fresca su dolor
y eterno viva en su raíz el llanto.

Si se arranca a volar, gritadle a voces
su culpa ; ¡ que recuerde !
Arrojadle pellas de barro oscuro al rostro.
Si en su palabra crecen las flores, nuevamente,
pisad su savia roja
hasta que nazcan lívidas como manos de muerto.
Talad. Talad. Que no descuelle su corazón
de musica oprimida.

.....
Porque esa es vuestra ley, tan extraña a la mia :
si un río se alza para hablar con la luna,
cegad su agua con montes.

Si una estrella olvidando su distancia se mece
en los agraces labios de un muchacho,
denunciadla a los astros.

Cuando un corzo se beba la libertad y el bosque,
atadlo como a un perro.

Si algun pez aprendiera a vivir sin el agua,
negadle orilla y tierra.

Si unas manos el aire lentamente acarician,
soñando las caderas del goce,
ponedlas sobre un tajo.

Si el alba se deslumbra apasionada
clavad las hojas verdes de la noche en sus ojos.

Si hay un hombre que tiene
su corazon de viento,
llenadsele de piedras
y hundidle la rodilla sobre el pecho.

Knock his wound once in a while ;
never leave it free to heal.
His pain must spurt fresh blood
and anguish live on for ever in his entrails.

If he takes to flight, clamour after him
that he is guilty ; he must not forget.
Hurl lumps of dark earth in his face.
If flowers begin to grow among his words
tread on their scarlet sap
until they grow as pale as dead men's hands.
Lay waste. Lay waste. His heart must not release
the music locked inside it.

.....
For this is your law, so alien to mine :
if a river rises to converse with the moon,
wall in its water with mountains.

If a star forgetting its distance plunges down
into the unripe lips of a boy,
denounce it to the heavenly bodies.

If a fallow deer drinks freedom and woods,
leash it like a dog.

If a fish should learn to live without water
deprive it of shore and land.

If hands should gently caress the air
dreaming of the thighs of enjoyment,
put them on a chopping-block.

If the dawn breaks passionately bright
drive the green swords of night into its eyes.

If there is a man whose heart
is made out of the wind,
Weight him with stones
and drown him with his knees against his chest.

La Vida

Decidme cómo es un árbol.
Decidme el canto de un río,
cuando se cubre de pájaros.

Habladme del mar. Habladme
del olor ancho del campo.
De las estrellas. Del aire.

14 Recitadme un horizonte
sin cerraduras y sin llaves
como la choza de un pobre.

Decidme cómo es el beso
de una mujer. Dadme el nombre
del amor : no lo recuerdo.

¿ Aún las noches se perfuman
de enamorados con tiemblos
de pasión bajo la luna ?

¿ O sólo queda esta fosa,
la luz de una sepultura
y la canción de mis losas ?

Veintidós años . . . ya olvido
la dimensión de las cosas,
su color, su aroma . . . ESCRIBO

a tuestas : "el mar", "el campo" . . .

Digo "bosque" y he perdido
la geometría de un árbol.

Hablo por hablar de asuntos
que los años me borraron.

(no puedo seguir : escucho
los pasos del funcionario).

Life

Tell me what a tree is like.
Tell me how a river sings
when the birds are lying on it.

Talk to me about the sea
and the open smell of fields.
Talk about the stars, the air.

Tell me of a wide horizon
without locks and without keys
like the cottage of a poor man.

Tell me what a woman's kiss
is like. Find me the word for love :
I have forgotten it.

Are the nights still perfumed
with lovers shuddering
in passion under the moon ?

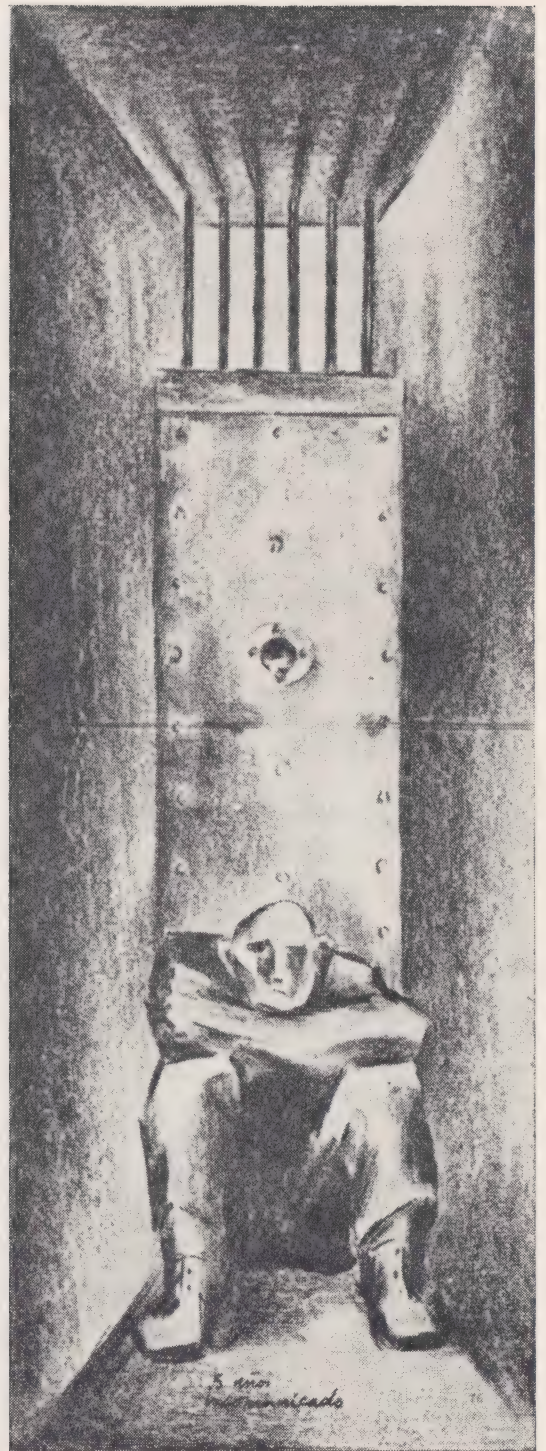
Or is there just this pit,
the light of a tomb
and the song of the flagstones ?

Twenty two years . . . I am forgetting
the size of things,
their colour, their smell . . . I write

gropingly : "the sea", "the fields" . . .
I say "woods" and I have lost
the true proportions of a tree.

I speak only to speak of things
that the years have worn away.

(I cannot go on : I hear
the warder's coming steps).



Norma

Quiero que mis poemas tengan hueso
y estructura de piedras palpitantes ;
verlos siempre de pie (torres errantes
de la vida y el hombre), por su peso.

Capaces de ser bala y de ser beso,
cantos de paz o puños resonantes ;
azules como el rayo o verdeantes
como olivo maduro . . . Que su espeso

son a metal, colmena o bosque herido,
suba desde mi sangre, tensamente,
a otro labio desierto y perseguido.

¡ Versos con alma y versos con simiente,
con atléticos hombros y un erguido
pueblo de corazones por su frente !

Model

I want my poems to be pulsing stones,
to have their core and structure, inbuilt powers
which hold them ever upright (walking towers
of life and man) poised perfectly alone.

Able to be a kiss, a bullet's flick,
songs bringing peace or fists thudding on mark ;
blue as a lightning flash or green and dark
as a ripe olive tree. I want their thick

metallic sound, harmed hive or damaged wood,
tense in its hum, to rise from my blood-flow
to other lips, hurt, barren, lacking food.

Poems with souls, poems with seeds to sow,
with lithe athletic shoulders and a good
and upright-hearted nation on their brow.





Imaginaria

Oidme amigos.
He visto
con los ojos soñolientos
algo que quiero contaros.

Es la madrugada. Un preso
en frente de mí despierta.
Se incorpora sobre un codo.
Saca un cigarro. Se sienta.

- 18 Mientras fuma, tiene ausente
la mirada,
como dormida la frente.
(Sueña el viento
en la ventana)
Tira el cigarro. Se inclina.
Saca un pedazo de pan,
se lo come lentamente
y después . . . rompe a llorar.
(Quizas no tenga importancia.
Yo os lo cuento)
Ya sabeis que a mi, las losas
me han gastado hasta los huesos
del corazon,
pero ver llorar a un hombre
es algo, siempre, tremendo.

Y este preso no es un árbol
que se ha roto. Sigue ileso.
Pero de pronto ha salido
todo lo suyo a su encuentro
en esta noche tranquila . . .
Con su dolor en mi pecho
le miro. No puede verme.
Sus ojos estan muy lejos.
Sus ojos cerca, llorando
tan suave, tan hondamente
que apenas si mueve el aire
y el silencio.
Un alerta le estremece.
(Por el patio
se oye cruzar el relevo)

Night Watch

Listen friends.
With drowsy eyes
I have seen
something I want to tell you.

It is daybreak. Opposite me
a prisoner wakes up.
He raises himself on one elbow.
Takes out a cigarette. Sits up.
His gaze as he smokes
is lost,
and his forehead is untroubled.
(The wind is dreaming
in the window.)
He draws at the cigarette. Bends forward.
Takes a piece of bread,
eats it slowly
and then begins to cry.
(This does not matter perhaps.
I am just telling you)
As for me, you know that the flagstones
have worn down
the core of my heart,
but to see a man crying
is always a terrible thing.

And this prisoner is not
a broken tree. He is still unscarred.
But all at once everything he possesses
has stood before him during this quiet night . . .
With his pain in my breast
I look at him. He cannot see me.
His gaze is very distant.
He shields his eyes, crying
so softly, so deep down
that the air and the silence hardly stir.
A sudden watchword makes him start.
(In the yard
you can hear the guard changing over).



Deseo

Y el hijo de Cain que ya no pueda
contra la primavera desatada
levantar su rencor, ni asesinar al beso.
Que odio no consigya
inundar las riberas asépticas del aire.
Que no pueda un cuchillo
contra una golondrina,
ni el asesino pueda
estrangular la aurora.
20 Que no pueda la guerra
aplastar las cabezas de los recién nacidos,
ni cortar las arterias
jubilosas del hombre.
Que no existan colmillos,
ni pistolas, ni baba,
ni la rabia levante
sus olas insensatas.

Solo el amor tremendo
como todos los mares
lloviendo en catarata
sobre nuestras pupilas,
inundando planetas
y llenando los versos
de todos los poetas.

A Wish.

That son of Cain, let him have no more power
to loose his fury on the unfettered spring
or deal death to the kiss.
Let hatred be restrained from flooding
the pristine margins of the air.
Let knives become
impotent against swallows, and the assassin
powerless to garrotte the dawn.
May war never again
batter the skulls of newborn babes, or sever
the exultant arteries of a man.
Let poisoned fangs and pistols
and slaving jaws be done away,
and nevermore let frenzy lash us
with its insensate waves.

Let nothing remain but a love
as vast as all the oceans,
pouring like a cataract across the pupils
of our eyes, flooding the planets,
filling the songs of poets everywhere.





22 Si, lo comprendo.
Tú llevas una cruz sobre tu pecho,
tú rezas con fervor todos los días,
tú esperas tu cosecha en ese mundo.
Hay ángeles azules que siegan con sus alas
las azules espigas de tus sueños.
Está bien.

Pero tu corazón, ¿ no está conmigo,
con su raíz, su tierra inevitable ?
Necesitas tú pan de cada día,
los pájaros, los árboles, el agua
y el aire que respiras.
Ven tus ojos paisajes
(cómo van a evitarlo si están vivos)
que dan pena o canción a tu mirada.

No lograrás cegarte,
ni huirte a una ladera solitaria
ni ensordecer el grito de los hombres :
el amor sabe a incienso y es humano.

Mi madre era "Ana santa",
un puñado de carne consumida,
arrebujada y sola en el silencio,
que murió de rodillas — me contaron —
crucificada sobre un leño de llanto,
con mi nombre de hijo entre sus labios
pidiendo a Dios el fin de mis cadenas.

(Hoy hay madres que rezan todavía
— miles de corazones prosternados —
por sus hijos heridos en las sombras
y que luchan, golpean

Yes, I understand.
You wear a crucifix upon your breast.
You say your prayers devoutly every day.
You don't expect to reap your harvest here :
angels on high are mowing with their wings
the bluey ripening tassels of your dream.
Well and good.

And yet your heart is of a piece with mine,
rooted with me in all-embracing earth.
You cannot do without your daily bread,
the birds, the trees, the water
and the air you breathe.
Your eyes see landscapes —
they cannot fail to if they are alive —
which make your glances sad or make them sing.
You cannot blind yourself.
Nor can you flee to a lonely hillside.
Nor can you stifle out the cries of men.

Love has the tang of incense and is human.
My mother was a saint.
A handful of wasted flesh
huddled and deserted in the silence.

She died upon her knees, they told me,
crucified on a beam of sorrow
with her son's name, my name, upon her lips
asking that God should free me from my chains.
(There are still mothers praying for their sons —
thousands of prostrate hearts —
their sons who have been wounded in the darkness.
And other women struggle,
beating on the doors of all the earth

en las puertas de la tierra,
exigen de los hombres la muerte de los muros).

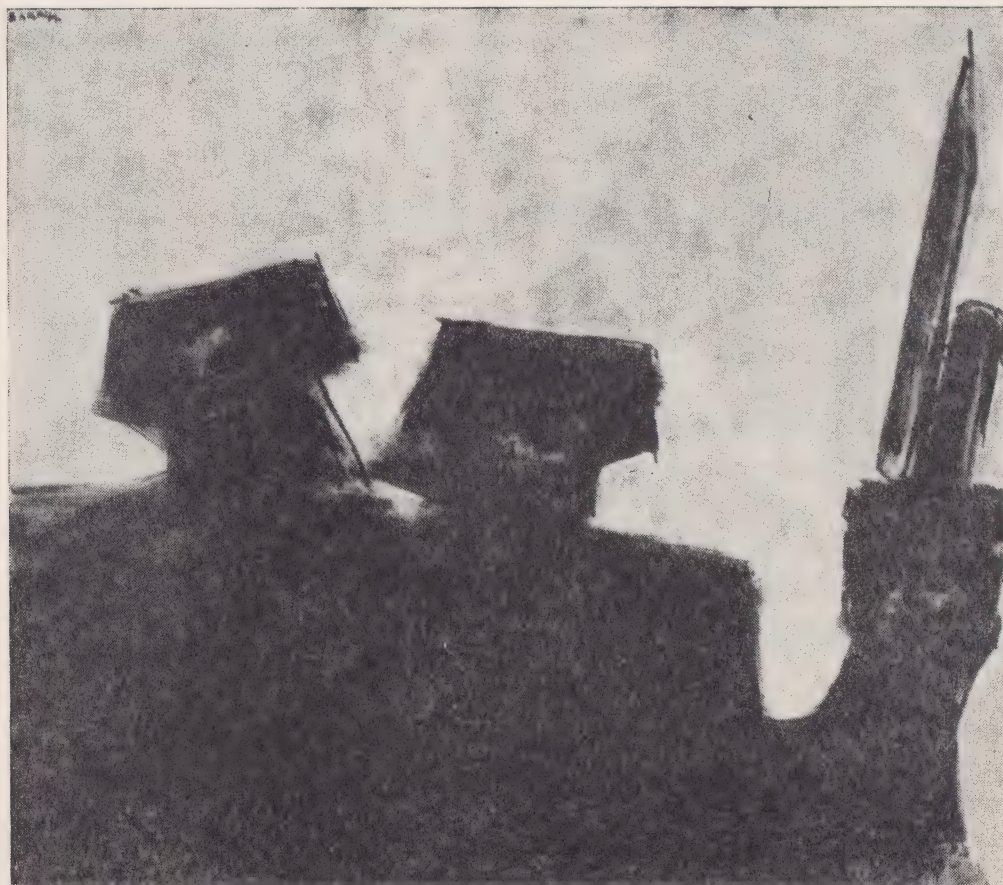
Escúchame quien quiera que tú seas
si es que el amor a Dios el alma te ilumina,
no puedes de este mundo así marcharte,
emprender la gran senda con las manos vacías
llegar ante las puertas de Dios, que tu fe sueña
existen bajo el arco del Eterno Cubijo,
para decir : Señor, no traigo nada.
dame un punto de amor de tu lumbre divina.

Porque el Señor, tu Dios contestaría :
vete, rompe tus pies por los bermejos hielos infinitos
apóyate en la vara nudosa de tus odios,
serás un caminante para siempre si no hallas
la palma del amor que no quisiste
tomar del *Arbol Que Planto Mi Sangre*.

asking all mankind to kill the walls.)

Listen now, whoever you may be,
if your soul is lit by the love of God :
You cannot leave this world all by yourself,
set out on the great path with empty hands,
arrive before the Gates of God — which your faith dreams
stand underneath the arch of the Eternal Home —
to say "Lord, Lord, I have brought nothing with me ;
give me a place in the love of your divine light."

Because the Lord your God will answer "Go.
Hack up your feet on red unending ice,
lean on the knotted stick of all your hatreds ;
and you shall be a wanderer eternally unless
you find the palm of love which you refused to take
from the tree which was seeded by my blood."





Que cerca suena el mar sus caracolas
 en un rumor mojado y soñoliento.
 Siento gusto de sal, sabor de viento
 peinado en las rompientes y en las olas.

Estoy en la prisión soñando a solas
 con mi mar vizcaino y turbulento ;
 oigo su inmensidad, su movimiento
 y el furor infinito que enarbola.

Más la seca Castilla es quien asoma
 dorándome la reja y el petate
 a esta ventana donde sueño y canto ;
 esta Castilla de escarpada loma
 me pesa como el mar, hoy mismo late
 los redondos cantiles de mi llanto.

How near the ocean conches blow this evening,
 Lulling me with their wet and drowsy sound.
 I can taste the salt, and sense the tang of wind
 Combed by the breakers and the deep sea swell.

I am alone in the prison, dreaming of
 The turbulence of my Cantabrian sea ;
 I hear its vastness and its surging roar,
 And the enormous fury of its tempests.

But the reality before my eyes
 Is dry Castile, gilding my bars and pallet,
 Through the cell window, where I muse and sing.
 This arid province with its rugged hills
 Assails me like the sea, and still it beats
 Against the solid cliffs of my distress.





- 28 Canto a las minas, canto
al metal, que espera ciego
su fiero nacimiento de través.
Canto a la verde espuma del cobre,
a la sangre telúrica del hierro,
a la pesada lágrima del plomo,
a la policromada espera del metal
yo canto.
Porque él dispone también
de una baraja de colores
y alza hasta el sol su primavera
de sólido contorno.
Canto al oscuro
racimo de carbón,
a la tenaz porfla
con que el diamante siega
las pisadas del tiempo.
Mi canto va buscando
la salvaje armonía
de las estalagmitas
elevando del agua
sus gritos verticales.
Yo canto a esta infinita
ceguera constructiva
con que el tiempo, alfarero,
retuerce en sus pulgares
la arcilla del silencio.
Canto al cielo invertido
donde Dios es la tierra
extendiendo su reino
de besos y serrillas.
Manos para el metal,
ese es mi canto ;
amor del fuego
todavía incipiente.

I sing the mine ; the metal blindly awaiting
its harsh passage to life.
I sing green foam of copper,
the iron's earthy blood,
and the ponderous teardrop of lead ;
the multicoloured metals bidding their time ...
All this I sing.
For metal too has its gamut of colours,
and throws up to the light
its rigid clusters of spring flowers.
I sing the dark roots of coal,
the stubborn diamond
reaping the footprints of time.
My song seeks the savage music
of stalagmites, that build
resounding columns out of water.
I sing the infinite creativeness
Of the blind potter, time, whose thumbs
model the clay of silence.
I sing the inverted vault where God becomes
the earth above, with its spread kingdom
of love and ripening seeds.
And hands to work the metal, these I sing ;
the love of furnaces not yet aglow.
A chaos that demands man's presence
to order it, and to transform the ore
to ploughshare, forceps, or magnetic needle.
I sing the metal that means peace and hope.

Un caos que llamará
la presencia del hombre
para hacerse compás,
arado, brújula, tenaza.
Este metal que canto
de paz y de esperanza.





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